

Monique Dorantes- Jefferson

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DDS Cuts

My name is Monique Dorantes Jefferson. I am a Licensed Practical Nurse at the Meriden Respite Center. I have worked with the State for 24 years. It's important to me that you hear how important this respite center is to our clients!

Thank you to the co-chairs, Senator Osten, Senator Formica, and Representative Walker, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee.

I am testifying today to urge the committee to reject the cuts that the Governor has proposed to DDS. I am glad that the budget includes expansion of respite services.

I'm worried that the Meriden Respite Center will be closed. Don't close it! Much of it was recently renovated. Don't waste state dollars by closing our center. It is wheelchair accessible, close to parks and hospitals. There's lots of space.

It is the only center for medically involved ID/DD individuals in our part of the State. Those of us who work at this center care for the State's most vulnerable individuals. Their family members need more-not less respite care!

I urge you to disregard the cuts requested in the Governor's budget and work with us going forward to find a way to help us provide the best care to our families.